Allergy Safety

2026-27

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Ponteland High School
Callerton Lane, Ponteland, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE20 9EG

Ponteland High School
Allergy Safety Policy

1. Purpose and scope
Ponteland High School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive environment in which students with allergies can participate fully in school life.
Allergy can range from relatively mild symptoms to severe and potentially life-threatening anaphylaxis. The school recognises that effective allergy management requires a whole-school approach involving students, parents/carers, school staff, catering staff and, where appropriate, healthcare professionals.

This policy sets out the school's arrangements for:

- identifying and supporting students with allergies;
- reducing the risk of exposure to known allergens;
- managing food allergy;
- ensuring appropriate access to emergency medication;
- responding to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis;
- providing allergy awareness and emergency response training;
- supporting students through Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs), where required;
- ensuring students with allergies can participate fully in school life, including educational visits;
- recording, reviewing and learning from allergy-related incidents and near misses.

This policy should be read alongside the school's **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy**, First Aid arrangements, Educational Visits procedures, Safeguarding Policy and relevant food safety procedures.

2. Legal framework and guidance
This policy has been developed with regard to:

- Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- Section 34 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026;
- Department for Education *Allergy Safety in Schools: Statutory Guidance* (2026);
- Department for Education *Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions* statutory guidance;
- the Equality Act 2010;
- the Human Medicines Regulations 2012, as amended;
- relevant food information and allergen legislation, including the Food Information Regulations 2014.

The governing body has responsibility for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place to support students with allergies.

3. Leadership and responsibilities
The named senior leader responsible for allergy safety at Ponteland High School is **Mr Close-Ash, Assistant Headteacher**.

The named senior leader will oversee implementation of this policy and ensure that appropriate systems are in place for identifying students with allergies, developing and reviewing Individual Healthcare Plans where required, staff training, access to emergency medication, incident review and communication with parents/carers.

All members of staff have a responsibility to follow this policy and the individual arrangements established for students in their care.

Staff should take reasonable steps to minimise students' exposure to known allergens and must know how to summon assistance and respond appropriately where an allergic reaction is suspected.

4. Identifying students with allergies
Parents/carers are asked to provide the school with up-to-date information about any allergy or medical condition affecting their child, including:

- the nature of the allergy;
- known allergens or triggers;
- symptoms and previous reactions;
- medication prescribed;
- whether the student has been prescribed adrenaline devices;
- relevant medical or Allergy Action Plans; and
- any particular arrangements required in school.

Relevant medical information is recorded using **Medical Tracker**, which provides the school with a central system for recording and managing students' medical needs.
Information will be updated when the school is informed of a change in a student's condition or treatment.

Parents/carers have a responsibility to notify the school promptly of changes to their child's allergy, medication or treatment and to provide replacement medication where necessary.

Appropriate arrangements should normally be established before a student starts at Ponteland High School. Where a new allergy is diagnosed or a student joins during the academic year, the school will seek to establish necessary arrangements as quickly as practicable.

5. Individual Healthcare Plans
An Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) will be developed where a student's allergy:

- has a functional impact upon them in school;
- places them at risk of harm; and
- requires arrangements additional to or different from those normally available within school.

IHPs will be developed collaboratively with the student, their parents/carers and, where appropriate, relevant healthcare professionals.

IHPs are recorded and managed through Medical Tracker.

Where a healthcare professional has provided an Allergy Action Plan or Asthma Action Plan, this should be incorporated into or attached to the student's IHP.

An IHP may include:

- known allergens and triggers;
- symptoms and signs of an allergic reaction;
- measures required to reduce exposure;
- medication and where it is kept;
- emergency procedures;
- arrangements for food and catering;
- reasonable adjustments required in lessons or other activities;
- arrangements for school trips and visits;
- responsibilities of the student, parents and school; and
- any other individual arrangements required to enable the student to participate fully in school.

IHPs will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where the student's needs change, following an incident or near miss, or where updated clinical information or an updated Allergy Action Plan is received.

6. Allergy awareness and staff training
The school will ensure that staff receive appropriate allergy awareness and emergency response training at least annually.

Training will include:

- understanding what allergy is and how allergic reactions occur;
- recognising the symptoms of allergic reactions;
- recognising anaphylaxis;
- understanding the relationship between allergy, asthma and anaphylaxis;

- knowing how to summon emergency assistance;
- knowing where emergency medication is located;
- understanding when and how adrenaline should be administered;
- practical awareness of the adrenaline devices available within school;
- understanding the school's allergy safety arrangements;
- reducing the risk of exposure to known allergens; and
- reporting allergy-related incidents and near misses.

Appropriate arrangements will be made for new, temporary, supply and other relevant staff.
First aid training alone will not be regarded as a substitute for whole-school allergy awareness and emergency response training.

7. Minimising exposure to allergens
Ponteland High School cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment. Instead, the school adopts an allergy-aware approach which seeks to identify risks, take proportionate steps to minimise exposure and maintain robust emergency arrangements.

The school does not describe itself as a "nut-free" school, as such terminology may create a false sense of security and does not recognise the wide range of allergens capable of causing serious reactions.

Staff should consider allergy risks when planning activities involving food or materials which may contain allergens. This includes, where relevant:

- Food Technology;
- Science;
- Art and craft activities;
- PE and sporting activities;
- activities involving animals;
- celebrations and special events;
- extracurricular activities; and
- educational visits.

Reasonable alternatives should be provided where necessary so that students with allergies are not unnecessarily excluded from activities.

Students should not share or exchange food, drinks, utensils or food containers where this may create an allergy risk.

8. Food allergy and catering
The school works with its catering provision to ensure that food allergy risks are identified and managed appropriately.

Catering staff will comply with applicable food safety and allergen legislation and maintain appropriate arrangements to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.

Information about the school's food provision, including information for students with food allergies and other dietary requirements, is available on the Ponteland High School website.
Information about allergens contained within food provided by the school is available from the catering team. Students should always ask a member of the catering team if they are uncertain whether a food is suitable for them.

Parents/carers who require further information about catering arrangements, or whose child develops a new food allergy, intolerance or other dietary requirement, should contact the school so that appropriate information can be recorded and passed to the catering team.
Where a student's food allergy requires individual arrangements or reasonable adjustments, these should be recorded within their IHP.

Students with allergies will not normally be segregated from their peers at mealtimes solely because of their allergy.

9. Food brought into school
The school recognises that food brought onto the premises by students, staff, parents or visitors may contain allergens.

Students and families are expected to act responsibly and to follow any specific instructions issued by the school where these are necessary to protect a student with a significant allergy.

Where food is being brought into school for an organised event or classroom activity, the member of staff responsible should consider the allergy needs of participating students in advance.

The sharing or trading of food between students is discouraged where this could present an allergy risk.

10. Prescribed adrenaline devices
Students who have been prescribed adrenaline devices should have rapid access to them throughout the school day.

Students who are sufficiently responsible to do so should normally carry their prescribed adrenaline devices with them in their school bag or in accordance with their IHP.

Students at risk of anaphylaxis should have access to the two adrenaline devices prescribed to them, as two doses may be required.

Where it is inappropriate for a student to carry their own medication, alternative arrangements will be recorded in their IHP. Medication must remain readily accessible and must not be stored in a way which could cause an unsafe delay during an emergency.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that prescribed medication supplied to school is in date and replaced when necessary, working with the school to maintain safe arrangements.

11. School emergency adrenaline auto-injectors
Ponteland High School maintains emergency "spare" adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) for use in an emergency.

Emergency AAIs are located at:

- Reception – Ground Floor
- Office, opposite G13 – Ground Floor
- Maths Workroom – Second Floor

The location of emergency medication is communicated to staff and emergency AAIs are stored so that they can be accessed rapidly.

Emergency AAIs will be:

- clearly identified;
- readily accessible;
- stored appropriately and at the correct temperature;
- kept in pairs;
- checked regularly for expiry dates and condition; and
- replaced following use or expiry.

The school's arrangements are designed so that adrenaline can be brought to a person experiencing anaphylaxis without unnecessary delay.

A student's own prescribed adrenaline device should normally be used first where it is immediately available. However, an emergency school AAI may be used where appropriate, including where the student's own device is unavailable or fails.

12. Responding to suspected anaphylaxis
Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency.

Symptoms involving the **Airway, Breathing or Circulation (ABC)** should be treated as suspected anaphylaxis.

Where anaphylaxis is suspected:

1. **Do not move the student to Reception or the medical room. Help and medication must be brought to them.**
2. Administer adrenaline immediately. Treatment should not be delayed while waiting for a first aider or for an ambulance.
3. Call **999** and state that anaphylaxis is suspected.
4. Follow the student's Allergy Action Plan/IHP where immediately available.
5. If symptoms do not improve, a second dose of adrenaline should be administered in accordance with emergency guidance.
6. Ensure the student is supervised continuously.
7. Contact the student's parents/carers.
8. Provide the ambulance service with relevant information, including the medication administered and the time it was given.

Any member of staff may take reasonable action in an emergency to save life.

Where there is uncertainty about whether symptoms constitute anaphylaxis, staff should follow their training and emergency guidance. Adrenaline should not be unnecessarily delayed where anaphylaxis is suspected.

13. Other allergic reactions

Where a student experiences a mild or moderate allergic reaction, staff should follow the student's IHP/Allergy Action Plan where one exists.

The student should be appropriately supervised and monitored because an allergic reaction may progress.

If symptoms affecting Airway, Breathing or Circulation develop, staff must treat the situation as anaphylaxis and follow the emergency procedure above.

14. Educational visits, sport and extracurricular activities

Students with allergies should be enabled to participate as fully as possible in educational visits, residential visits, sporting activities and extracurricular activities.

A student should not be excluded from an activity simply because they have an allergy where reasonable measures can enable them to participate safely.

Trip leaders must consider allergy and anaphylaxis as part of the risk assessment and planning process.

This should include consideration of:

- exposure to known allergens;
- food and catering arrangements;
- access to the student's prescribed medication;
- access to emergency medical assistance;
- whether an emergency school AAI should accompany the visit;
- staff awareness of the student's IHP/Allergy Action Plan; and
- the availability of staff able to respond appropriately in an emergency.

Students at risk of anaphylaxis must have access to their prescribed adrenaline devices during off-site activities.

Parents will not normally be required to accompany their child on a school visit simply because their child has an allergy.

15. Inclusion, wellbeing and bullying

Ponteland High School recognises that living with an allergy can affect a student's emotional wellbeing as well as their physical health.

Students should not be unnecessarily restricted from taking part in lessons, social activities, school meals, visits or other aspects of school life because of their allergy.
Staff should be alert to anxiety associated with allergy and should seek appropriate pastoral support where necessary.

Bullying, teasing or deliberately exposing another person to a known allergen will be treated seriously in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and safeguarding procedures.

Where appropriate, students will receive age-appropriate information about allergy awareness and the importance of seeking adult assistance where a peer appears to be experiencing an allergic reaction.

16. Information sharing and confidentiality

Information about a student's allergy will be shared with members of staff who need the information in order to keep the student safe and enable them to participate fully in school.

Relevant information is recorded securely through **Medical Tracker** and handled in accordance with the school's data protection arrangements and UK GDPR.

Staff must respect the confidentiality and dignity of students with allergies while recognising that appropriate sharing of health information is necessary for their safety.

Students and parents/carers will be involved, where appropriate, in decisions about how information about their allergy is communicated.

17. Serious incidents and near misses
Ponteland High School will record allergy-related serious incidents and significant near misses.

Medical Tracker will form part of the school's system for recording relevant medical incidents and reviewing the support provided to individual students.

Following a serious incident or significant near miss, the school will consider:

- what happened;
- the allergen or suspected allergen involved;
- whether established procedures were followed;
- whether emergency medication was readily accessible;
- the effectiveness of the emergency response;
- whether the student's IHP or Allergy Action Plan requires review;
- whether staff training needs to be refreshed;
- whether changes to catering, supervision or other procedures are required; and
- whether this Allergy Safety Policy requires amendment.

Parents/carers will be informed of significant incidents involving their child.

Relevant incidents and near misses will be reported to the governing body through appropriate school reporting arrangements so that lessons can be identified and improvements made.

Where required, incidents will also be reported to relevant external bodies in accordance with statutory requirements.

18. Responsibilities of parents and carers
Parents/carers should:

- inform the school of their child's allergy and any changes to it;
- provide accurate and current medical information;
- provide copies of Allergy Action Plans or other relevant clinical information;
- provide prescribed medication required in school;
- ensure medication is replaced before expiry;
- inform the school promptly if medication or treatment changes;
- work collaboratively with the school in developing and reviewing an IHP where required; and
- ensure their child understands their allergy at an age-appropriate level.

Parents should not normally be required to attend school to administer routine or emergency medication simply because their child has an allergy.

19. Responsibilities of students
Students will be encouraged, according to their age, maturity and individual needs, to take increasing responsibility for managing their allergy.

This may include:

- understanding their known allergens;
- avoiding food or substances they know may place them at risk;
- checking food allergen information;
- asking catering staff if they are uncertain about food;
- not sharing food or drinks;
- carrying their prescribed medication where appropriate;
- knowing how and when to seek help; and
- informing an adult immediately if they believe they are experiencing an allergic reaction.

Students must never deliberately expose another person to a substance which they know or believe may cause them an allergic reaction.

20. Monitoring and review
The implementation of this policy is overseen by Mr Close-Ash, Assistant Headteacher.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and approved through the school's governance arrangements.

An earlier review may be undertaken following:

- a serious allergic reaction;
- a significant near miss;
- changes to statutory guidance or legislation;
- changes to the school's catering or emergency medication arrangements; or
- evidence that existing procedures could be improved.

Medical Tracker records, feedback from students and parents, relevant incidents and near misses, and the experience of staff will inform the review process.

The school will seek to learn from incidents and near misses and use this learning to improve allergy safety arrangements.

21. Publication and awareness
This Allergy Safety Policy will be published on the **Ponteland High School website** and made available in hard copy on request.

Staff will be made aware of the policy through induction, training and regular communication.

Students and parents/carers will be made aware of the school's approach to allergy safety and how to notify the school of a new allergy or change to an existing condition.
Information relating to **food allergies, special dietary requirements and the school's catering provision is available on the school website**. Students and parents who require further allergen information should contact the school or speak directly with a member of the catering team.

Policy lead:	Will Close-Ash, Assistant Headteacher
Reviewed:	September 2026
Next review:	September 2027